

Information on Private Insurance Criteria for Maintaining Insurance Options

Birthday rule

- Primary coverage is determined by the birthday rule. The parent whose birthday comes first is the primary insurer.
- Is there more than one health plan for this youth? Two parent and divorced families may have multiple coverage. Remember first birthday usually determines primary coverage even in blended families.

Age Cap

- Check plan to see if there is an age cap. When does it start and under what circumstances, such as changing jobs?
- Some plans will cover young adults if they are students. What happens if the youth can only attend part-time due to the disability or chronic illness?

Permanent Dependent Status

- Check to see if the plan includes a permanent dependent status due to a dependency on family (financial and care).
- To what age does it extend? What conditions does youth have to meet in order to maintain coverage? Often this will mean that the youth is on SSI or meets the SSI disability definition, is not working full time, and lives at home. What documentation is needed?
- Some plans that have a permanent dependent status also have an age cap and to extend beyond the cap requires submitting verification paperwork several months in advance of the age cap.

Private Insurance Strategies to Continue Coverage

•COBRA (Consolidate Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986)

Allows employees and their dependent children to pay to continue their health plan after employment is terminated. Often expensive, premiums can be 150% of those of group plans but less than individual health coverage. Coverage period is 18 months and if certified disabled by SSA, coverage can extend to 36 months. (Must apply within 60 days).

•HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996)

This law allows eligibility coverage to be portable from a previous plan to a new plan. If the person was covered for at least 18 months prior to the application of new coverage, then the pre-existing condition exclusion of the new plan is waived. Applications must be made 63 days within losing group coverage.

Private Insurance Savvy

- Review member explanation of benefits packages carefully
- Evaluate benefits
- Ask office billing clerks which plans cover needed services.
- Ask other families about covered services and out-of-pocket expenses.
- Provide adequate documentation to justify specialized services and customized medical equipment. More than a prescription is needed these days. Brief descriptions, test results, preventative cost savings estimates, and pictures are helpful.
- Understand appeals processes and assist families in providing additional documentation.
- Key test- The Benefit Inquiry

Sometimes the Benefits Package doesn't fully describe what is covered and what isn't as in such cases as customized equipment or some medical procedures. The absolute test to see if a service is covered can happen after one is enrolled in a health plan. At this point, a vendor can call on behalf of a health plan subscriber's request for a service to assess what and if it will be covered

How to Stay Funded after Age 18: Public Programs

Medicaid through SSI

- Re-determination of SSI eligibility at age 18. At 18 adult standards for disabilities are used (Go to: www.ssa.gov and search the Blue Book for eligibility criteria). Up to 30% of youth losing SSI may also lose Medicaid.
- SSI and Ticket to Work incentives are complex and confusing. People on SSI can work and retain Medicaid.

Home and Community-Based waivers vary by state and allow special populations of children and adults with disabilities to receive Medicaid. Long waiting lists for special Medicaid waivers for adults with disabilities are common. *For more information on home and community-based waivers in your state contact: www.hcfa.gov/medicaid/hpg4.htm or call Nancy Peach at the Cabinet for Health Services (502) 564-7702 x 4485 or the Kentucky Home Health Association at (859) 268-2574.*

Medicare/ SSDI

- Can qualify for Medicare through SSDI
- Qualify for SSDI as an "adult disabled child" of an adult worker who has become disabled, retired, or is deceased
- Qualify for SSDI as an adult worker through their own work history (as little as 1 and 1/2 years)



KY Commission for Children with
Special Health Care Needs
KY TEACH Project



MCHB Healthy and Ready To Work Projects